



ROBIN CAMP
THE 'KNEES TOGETHER'
JUDGE RESIGNS
 metroNEWS

WHERE KONG IS KING

A cinematic history of Skull Island **metroLIFE**

Plus John C. Reilly on the moral of the newest flick



Halifax metro

NASA MADE ME BELIEVE IN ALIENS metroSCIENCE



Safe Space

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A new Metro podcast itsasafespace.com

The Dalhousie Tigers' Jordan Aquino-Serjue drives to the net against the Alberta Golden Bears on Thursday.
 THE CANADIAN PRESS

EYE OF THE TIGERS

Dalhousie roars back but Saint Mary's outmatched at nationals

metroSPORTS



TAXI VERDICT



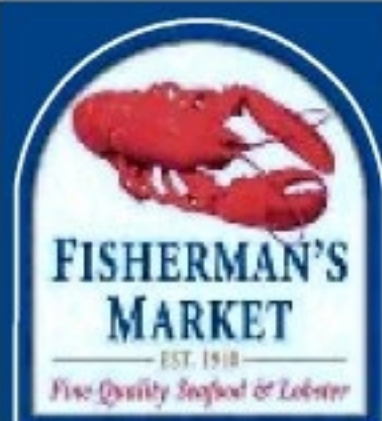
- 2012 allegation reopened against driver
- Bar association comes to judge's defence
- Sex-assault advocate says more women reaching out

metroNEWS



A TRIBUTE TO CITY'S WARTIME WOMEN

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WEEKEND SPECIALS FRI-SUN

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TAXI VERDICT



People turned out in the hundreds to protest last week's ruling by Judge Gregory Lenehan at Grand Parade on Tuesday afternoon. JEFF HARPER/METRO

Surge in victims seeking help

SEXUAL ASSAULT

Survivor advocate says there is still a lack of funding



Yvette d'Entremont
Metro | Halifax

Halifax's Avalon Sexual Assault Centre has experienced a surge in calls this past week, and employees are hoping it highlights the urgent need for funding of their services.

"In particular since Tuesday, we have seen an increase in people contacting us. Some people are looking for counselling services, and we have a lot of people from the general

public who are just calling to seek clarification around laws or to understand what's going on or who are wanting to show support," said the centre's executive director, Jackie Stevens.

"We have people calling about how they can help in terms of volunteering. We've had requests from people who want to do placements, and we've had a number of people looking for legal support and advocacy and sharing their stories because they're aware people have taken action around this situation and so they're reaching out."

Judge Gregory Lenehan's handling of cab driver Bassam Al-Rawi's case last week and his comments that "clearly a drunk can consent" resulted in nationwide condemnation, protests and petitions.

Earlier this week the Crown said it will appeal the cab driver's

+ POLICE URGE VICTIMS TO COME FORWARD

Halifax Regional Police are also encouraging victims of sexual assault to report it, saying they'll be supported.

"We certainly don't want what happened (last week) to dissuade victims to come forward, because ultimately we are here to help them. We have a trauma-informed approach," said Const. Dianne Penfound. "It's a very personal

acquittal.

"These kinds of high profile cases do validate people's experiences when they see that the general public is rallying and speaking out for changes to the laws or questioning what is happening and how people are being treated," Stevens said.

crime, and having to talk about that to strangers is very daunting, but at the end of the day it is a crime, you did nothing wrong, and we are here to help."

Penfound said in addition to having a victims' services team, the police force has sexual assault investigators who are passionate about their work.

"It does make (victims) feel believed and supported and so they do reach out for services ... What's really important is that services across the province that currently exist are sustained."

Stevens said Avalon and other centres offering similar services in Nova Scotia struggle on limited

funding. With increased demand on their services, and demand for additional services, she's hoping for more funding.

"We've been identifying since 2009-10 that our current service delivery was not possible in terms of our sustainability, in terms of resources, staff, finances," she said. "Every year our numbers have been increasing and we've been saying we can't sustain this."

Despite the struggle to provide services to an ever-increasing population of clients seeking their help, Stevens said they don't want victims to ever hesitate to access the resources available.

"We don't want to discourage people from coming forward ... These issues are in the forefront right now and they're not going away," she said.

"Lots has been done but this just highlights how much more there is to be done."

BY THE NUMBERS

344

Sexual assaults reported to Halifax Regional Police in 2014

382

Sexual assaults reported to Halifax Regional Police in 2015

387

Sexual assaults reported to Halifax Regional Police in 2016

TAXI VERDICT

Cabbie quizzed five years earlier

COURT DOCUMENTS

Police taking another look at allegations made in 2012

Halifax cab driver who was acquitted last week of sexually assaulting an intoxicated woman in the back of his taxi in 2015 was questioned after similar allegations three years earlier, according to court documents that allege an inebriated female passenger was taken to an apartment and sexually assaulted.

The claim is detailed in a search warrant related to the alleged 2015 incident involving 40-year-old cabbie Bassam Al-Rawi, and outlines the woman's earlier allegations.

The woman, who is not named, said she was driven to an apartment by a cab driver, taken upstairs and sexually assaulted sometime in 2012, according to the warrant. At the time, she told police she had limited recollection of the assault.

The document states that Al-Rawi was questioned and told police he did not recall the incident, and said he would not force someone to have sex and "that he had

+ 2014 INCIDENT

In a separate incident also detailed in the warrant, another woman alleged that Bassam Al-Rawi picked her up in 2014, drove past her house and kept going around the block, calling her "baby" and grabbing her hand when she tried to get out of the cab.

Al-Rawi told police the woman wanted to listen to a song, so he turned the meter off and kept driving, according to the warrant.

No charges were filed in that matter.

never had intercourse with someone who was sleeping or passed out."

Halifax police Const. Dianne Penfound said Thursday officers investigated an allegation five years ago, but found at the time that there was not enough evidence to proceed with a charge. She said they are now reviewing the investigation into an alleged sexual assault on Dec. 15, 2012, that involved a cab driver, but could not confirm the suspect's name since charges have not been laid.



Bassam Al-Rawi appears in Halifax Provincial Court last week. JEFF HARPER

Penfound said police had spoken to the alleged victim Wednesday, but she could not reveal anything about the case or the evidence.

"We have been in contact with her and are taking another look at it," she said. "It's a trauma-informed approach to sexual assaults and we want the victims to know that we support them throughout the process and after the process as well."

She said the woman alleges that she was picked up on Brunswick Street near Prince Street in downtown Halifax, taken to an apartment outside the city and sexually assaulted. The woman reported it to police sometime later.



Judge Gregory Lenehan. COURTESY CBC

"The evidence at the time was not sufficient for a charge, but we're going to look through it again," Penfound said.

She said the review would determine whether the 2012 case should be formally reopened.

Al-Rawi's lawyer, Luke

Craggs, said in an email Thursday that he has no comment on the earlier allegations.

On May 23, 2015, police say they found a woman passed out, partially dressed and highly inebriated in the back of Al-Rawi's cab on a residential street in south end Halifax. The warrant states that an officer approached the idling cab and spotted the woman, naked from the waist down and her tank top pushed up.

The officer stated that when Al-Rawi got out of the cab, she noticed his pants were partly down and his zipper was undone.

He was charged with sexual assault, but was acquitted by Judge Gregory Lenehan, who ruled that the Crown failed to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the woman did not consent to sexual activity — a decision that prompted protests and much debate over how the courts handle such sensitive cases.

The judge said a person is incapable of consent if they are unconscious or are so intoxicated that they are unable to understand or perceive their situation. "This does not mean, however, that an intoxicated person cannot give consent to sexual activity," he said. "Clearly, a drunk can consent."

The Public Prosecution Service announced Tuesday that it would appeal the decision, stating Lenehan made multiple legal mistakes in finding Al-Rawi not guilty.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

"The evidence at the time was not sufficient for a charge, but we're going to look through it again."
Const. Dianne Penfound

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Activists rallied at Tuesday's protest in Halifax over Judge Gregory Lenehan. JEFF HARPER/METRO

Locals clash over Lenehan

TAXI VERDICT
Association: calls for judge's removal are unfounded



Cody McEachern
 For Metro | Halifax

The Nova Scotia branch of the Canadian Bar Association (CBANS) has announced it echoes the comments of the Nova Scotia Criminal Lawyers Association (NSCLA) in condemning personal attacks against Judge Gregory Lenehan.

On Monday, the NSCLA stated that the public should be free to disagree with any judicial decision like Lenehan's acquitting Bassam Al-Rawi, but said the Crown was not able to prove the passenger's "lack of consent" despite her high intoxication level. They argued that calls for Lenehan's removal were "unfounded."

In a news release on Thursday, CBANS outlined parts of the NSCLA's comments they agreed with: that those charged with a criminal of-

fence are presumed innocent until guilty; that the Crown bears the burden of proving each element of the offence beyond a reasonable doubt; that judges must not be influenced or pressured by outside sources, including the government or public; and that errors of law or unreasonable verdicts, if appropriate, will be considered and corrected by the Court of Appeals if needed.

The release noted that transparency in judicial decision-making is a foundation of the justice system, and so is public debate — as long as it remains civil and respectful.

"Vitriol, name-calling and personal attacks directed at anyone, including a sitting judge, are unacceptable," the CBANS release said.

It also noted that the organization has always advocated for improved access to justice, and will continue to look into more effective ways for the justice system to address gender-based violence.

They also noted the release of their podcast, "Not Just A Bystander" on International Women's Day, which discusses legal implications of sexual assault and the role the community plays.



Vitriol, name-calling and personal attacks directed at anyone, including a sitting judge, are unacceptable.

Canadian Bar Association, Nova Scotia branch

COURT

'Knees together' judge Robin Camp quits following criticism by judicial council

The judge who asked a sexual assault complainant in a trial why she couldn't keep her knees together is resigning from the bench.

In a statement distributed by his lawyer, Justice Robin Camp said he would quit effective Friday. Camp says he's sorry for the hurt he has caused and is thankful for the support he received in recent months.

The Canadian Judicial Council recommended Camp be removed from the bench after transcripts from the 2014 trial showed he called the complainant "the accused" numerous times, and told her "pain and sex sometimes go together."

The council called Camp's conduct "manifestly and profoundly destructive" to the impartiality and integrity of

the bench.

The council's decision supports a recommendation by a disciplinary panel that Camp be removed from the bench for his comments in the original sexual assault trial of Alexander Wagar.

Camp found Wagar not guilty, but the Appeal Court ordered a new trial and last month Wagar was acquitted again.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Judge Robin Camp resigns as of Friday. THE CANADIAN PRESS



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Yours in service,

Carl Yates, General Manager

LITERATURE

Outlander author to visit city for meet and sign with fans



Cody McEachern
For Metro | Halifax

Fans of the historical romance-adventure book series Outlander will want to book off May 3 as author Diana Gabaldon holds a page-turning meet and read in Halifax.

"The event will follow like a traditional author visit," said Michael Hamm, manager at Bookmark bookstore.

"She will address the audience and probably read some sections from her work, depending on what she wants to do. We will then have a Q&A period followed by a meet and sign with Diana, which will be the highlight of the evening."

Gabaldon was only scheduled to visit Moncton for a meet and read event, but Bookmark contacted her publisher and got her visit extended to Charlottetown and Halifax.

The book series follows Second World War Army nurse Claire Randall, who time travels to Civil War-era Scotland after her husband begins research on his family. She is then taken by



Renowned writer Diana Gabaldon, author of the popular Outlander series. GUELPH MERCURY

a Scottish Gael and left to find a way back to her own time.

The author was listed as the No. 1 New York Times best-selling author due to the series, which has also been adapted into a hit TV show hitting its third season this September.

"She opened up new ground with a writing device she used — time travel," said Hamm.

"There are classic novels that use that as well, but Diana has brought that into a contemporary format. It was that device

that intrigued people, and her research into that era of Scotland is impeccable."

He also noted her clever blending of romance, mystery and adventure, and her ability to jump barriers such as age and gender as a large factor of the series' attraction.

The meet and read will be held at the Rebecca Cohn Auditorium at 7:30 p.m., and tickets are \$23 including taxes. Tickets are general admission and seating is first come, first served.

Plays, parades and hip-hop

Five things to do in Halifax this weekend, including a mug-making workshop for a good cause

CODY MCEACHERN METRO HALIFAX



Gordie Brown sings the hits in Neptune Theatre's production of The Songs of the Rat Pack this weekend. The performance is part of Neptune's bonus feature series. JEFF HARPER/METRO

No plans for the weekend? Here are five things to do in the city, including mug making.

The Girl With The Golden Ear

Think you have an ear for music? Got a taste for music from the '60s and '70s? So does Marjorie, a single mother with a knack for picking out hit songs who uses her talent to move up the ranks of a local radio station in *The Girl With the Golden Ear*.

Written by Ryan Van Horne, it touches on sexism, the changing music industry and government bureaucracy of the era. The play at the Bedford Players Theatre runs Friday and Saturday at 8 p.m., and Sunday at 2 p.m., through to March 26. Tickets start at \$15.

St. Patrick's Parade 2017

It's that time of year again where everything but the grass turns green. The annual St. Patrick's Parade will follow a

slightly different route from past years, instead winding through historic Irishtown (Lower Water Street) before ending up at the Lower Deck for some St. Paddy's Day fun.

The parade will kick off at 1 p.m. from Pier 20 on Sunday. The parade is free, so come get green and have fun.

Songs of the Rat Pack

The music of Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis Jr., and Dean Martin is coming to Halifax.

The *Songs of the Rat Pack* features Gordie Brown, and will take audience members on a trip through the super groups' chart-topping careers during the 1950s and '60s.

The show runs through Sunday at Neptune Theatre, and will start at 8 p.m. with 4 p.m. showings on the weekend. Tickets are available online at neptunetheatre.com.

Mugs on Tap

Learn how to work with and

form different types of ceramics while creating mugs for charity at the Mugs on Tap mug-making day. The event is open to everyone, and the mugs will be used for the Mugs on Tap event in April.

It will be held at the NSCAD Port campus on Friday, and will run from 12 to 7 p.m. Learn how to make mugs for a good cause, then take your new skills and make a 'World's Best Person' mug for yourself.

SonReal in Hali

In support of his No Warm Up tour, SonReal will be playing in Halifax with special guest Clairmont The Second.

Experience some of the best hip-hop to come out of Western Canada and bump your head to hits like Everywhere We Go and No Warm Up. Opening will be local artist Quake Matthews and Saint John artist Adam Jenkins. The show starts at 9 p.m. Friday at the Marquee Ballroom, and advance tickets start at \$24.99.

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Paying tribute to Halifax women

PUBLIC ART

Design of first monument is revealed

During the Second World War, Peggy McAlpine made a lot of sandwiches — thousands of them.

Halifax was bustling in wartime, clogged with young servicemen waiting to board ships headed overseas, and they needed food, and often a sympathetic ear.

It wasn't glamorous work at the North End Service Canteen, but it was part of a massive volunteer effort, run mainly by women.

"I made sandwiches and I listened to the heartbreak stories ... They would usually sail the next day," the 101-year-old said Thursday after helping unveil the design for a unique monument that will pay tribute to female volunteers during the Second World War.

"It brings back sad memories, but happy memories, too. The women were there



Artist Marlene Hilton Moore laughs while posing next to her designs for monuments honouring women volunteers during the Second World War in Halifax on Thursday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

for these young men ... We tried to send them off feeling better."

The proposed bronze sculpture will be called "A Woman on the Waterfront."

It will be the first in the city to pay tribute to women. Of the 280 statues in Hali-

"African Nova Scotian women's stories are even less told."

Janet Guildford

fax, fewer than a dozen show women, and virtually all of them are mythical figures, such as fairies and nymphs.

"Their story has to be told — we want to make them visible," said project leader Janet Guildford, chairwoman of Halifax Women's History

Society.

"They are symbolic of all the women in our city who have contributed to its history without any recognition. This is the very first significant monument to women in the Halifax area."

The design sketches unveiled Thursday show three life-size figures, each from a different generation.

The first statue will be that of a young girl pulling a wagon, collecting metal scraps as part of a salvage drive. The scarce material was recycled during the war to make tanks, airplanes and munitions. At the time, movie theatres across Canada granted children free admission to matinees for every scrap of aluminum they brought in.

The second sketch shows an African Nova Scotian woman carrying coffee cups on a food tray. Nova Scotia women served meals to the more than 100,000 servicemen who passed through Halifax on their way to Europe, but the canteens and hostels were segregated.

The third figure is that of

an older woman seated with a Mi'kmaq basket, knitting needles in hand. The Canadian Red Cross estimates that 750,000 volunteers knit 50 million articles of clothing during the Second World War, including socks, stocking caps and sweaters.

The plan is to place the monument in a busy spot along the city's waterfront boardwalk, across from the Port of Halifax building, in mid-November.

Sculptor Marlene Hilton Moore said of the two dozen figures she has sculpted over the years, only three were women.

"This monument will end the invisibility of women in public art in the city," she said.

"To bring to the public real women, who are doing real things, and then monumentalize those real activities, that's what's so valuable ... Times have changed. In the contemporary art world, you might be embarrassed to create a little fairy and put it in a public space. It's not done any more." THE CANADIAN PRESS

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CRIME PREVENTION

Community leaders honoured

Nova Scotia recognized 11 people on Thursday for preventing crime in the province.

The Minister's Awards for Leadership in Crime Prevention were handed out for the seventh year during a ceremony at Province House on Thursday recognizing people "who developed partnerships and programs that address root causes of crime and supported others in their efforts to make our communities safer."

Carlos Beals, senior outreach worker with Ceasefire Halifax was honoured for his work reducing violence, saving lives, redirecting high-risk youth and strengthening his community.

Jennifer Bernier with the Centre for Building Resilience Through Anti-Violence Education was also honoured with an individual award for providing support for at-risk girls and their families.

Luke MacDonald of Aerobics First won a corporate award and SMU student Andrew Henneberry won a youth award.

Tony Robinson and Ron Cheverie were honoured with the community group award for their work with Crime Stoppers.

Policing awards were handed out to RCMP Const. Nathan Sparks, Halifax Regional Police Const. Mark Stevens and RCMP



Carlos Beals. THE CANADIAN PRESS

crime analyst Sheila Serfas.

Richard Derible with the Halifax Regional School Board and RCMP Const. Colin Helm were given restorative justice awards. METRO

CULTURE

Fund launched to help museums

A new endowment fund has been launched to benefit accredited museums in the province.

The MuseFund will help to create a future for museums that all Nova Scotians and visitors to the province can engage in.

Anita Price, executive director of the Association of Nova Scotia Museums, says museums play an important role in communities as employers, educators and economic developers.

She adds that history and

family origins are important in Nova Scotia.

"A sense of community and belonging are part of the culture. Our museums express this and showcase what makes us who we are," she said.

Unfortunately, funding levels have not kept up with inflation and rising costs so a way to sustain culture and heritage is needed.

The MuseFund was launched Feb. 23 at a zero starting point,

but has a goal of reaching an initial \$2.5 million over the next five years. The Community Foundation of Nova Scotia will manage the funds raised. Accredited museums in the province will be eligible to apply for some of the funding.

Once the fund has reached \$1 million, the interest earned will be used to support four funding streams: engagement, stewardship, investment and growth.

TC MEDIA

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NEW BRUNSWICK

Men accused of assaulting Dennis Oland appear in court

Two Halifax men charged with assaulting Dennis Oland in a New Brunswick prison appeared briefly in court Thursday.

Convicted killer Cody Alexander Muise and Aaron Marriott, who was convicted in a 2008 drug shooting, allegedly attacked Oland at Atlantic Institution in Renous, N.B., on July 31.

The two appeared in Miramichi provincial court by video link from Renous. Both sat quietly in blue T-shirts, saying only "yes" when asked to confirm they understood what was happening.

The case was adjourned until April 27 to allow the defence time for "further consultations." The two still need to make a plea and elect type of trial.

Oland had been jailed for 10 months after a jury found him guilty of second-degree murder in the 2011 bludgeoning of his multi-millionaire father, businessman Richard Oland.

The 48-year-old Saint John financial planner was released on bail in October after a court overturned his murder conviction and ordered a new trial.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

+ HISTORY

Cody Muise was convicted of first-degree murder for killing Brandon Hatcher in December 2010 in a gun battle in suburban Halifax, and is serving a life sentence.

Aaron Marriott was sentenced to 15 years for a 2008 drug shooting outside the IWK Health Centre in Halifax.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

JAIL

Police not at fault in suicide attempt

Nova Scotia's independent police watchdog says there are no grounds for charges after a man was found unconscious in a Halifax jail cell last month.

The Serious Incident Response Team says the 47-year-old man had tried to hang himself with his sweater last August following his arrest on the grounds of

the Nova Scotia Hospital in Dartmouth for public intoxication.

SIRT says he was taken to police headquarters in downtown Halifax, where he suffered a serious brain injury after being found during a routine check 17 minutes after being placed in a holding cell.

SIRT says officers adminis-

tered first aid and called for an ambulance, and there are no grounds for charges against police.

SIRT says the man's condition was initially very dire, and while he has recovered significantly, "he continues to suffer from a serious brain injury."

THE CANADIAN PRESS



DOGGONE IT NOT SNOW A dog watches as snow falls during a storm in Halifax this winter. Environment Canada issued a special weather statement for the Halifax region with snow forecast to begin late Friday and continue into early Saturday morning, with significant accumulation possible. JEFF HARPER/METRO

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Firefighters do it all to rescue deer

ANIMALS

Lake scene 'pretty much like in the movie Bambi'

Firefighters say it was a scene right out of Bambi.

Rob Bezanson, deputy chief of Brookfield Fire and Emergency Services, had to crawl out on the ice of Shortts Lake last week to rescue a small doe that had fallen and couldn't stand up.

"It was pretty much like in the movie Bambi," said Bezanson. "It was slippery and it just couldn't

get its feet under it. There was a pretty good layer of water on top of the ice and the little doe was just exhausted."

Residents of Shortts Lake, 20 minutes southwest of Truro, called 911 about 10 a.m. March 2 to report that a deer had been stuck out on the freshwater lake for four or five hours.

"We went out on the ice to prevent one of the residents from going out and then us having to go out and rescue them," said Bezanson.

Bezanson put on an immersion floater suit and walked and crawled about 300 feet over the ice trailing safety lines to firefighters onshore. He said the ice



**She just dropped
her head on my
knee and laid
there.**

Rob Bezanson

was actually quite strong once away from the shore but covered in water.

He said the deer was so tired and wet it was unable to help save itself at all.

"She was pretty exhausted but at least on dry land she has a standing chance," said Bezanson.

TC MEDIA

POLICE

Cop punched in face during arrest

Halifax Regional Police say one officer was punched in the face and another bit in the forearm during an attempted arrest in Dartmouth.

The force says around 9:15 p.m. Wednesday they were called to Caledonia Road and

Roleika Drive after a 50-year-old man said he was threatened by someone he knew with a knife.

When police arrived they found the suspect and tried to arrest him, and that's when the assaults took place.

The two officers were able to eventually get the cuffs on the 25-year-old man, who has been charged with possession of a weapon dangerous, assaulting police and resisting arrest.

Neither officer required medical attention. METRO

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Boundary process, then vote: Tories

ELECTION

There is a risk of legal fight if not, warns Opposition

Nova Scotia's Liberal government will have a legal fight on its hands if it calls an election without first using a formal commission to redraw the province's electoral boundaries, warns the Official Opposition.

The government has been forced to address boundaries after a January court ruling that found the previous NDP government was wrong to force an independent commission to redraw three predominantly French-speaking ridings to have them include a larger, English-speaking population.

Michel Samson, the minister responsible for the Office of Acadian Affairs, is refusing to divulge the government's response to the ruling as it talks to the Acadian Federation of Nova Scotia about how to proceed.

But Progressive Conservative Leader Jamie Baillie said Thursday that the government's ap-

proach smacks of an old-fashioned "back room deal" to draw the electoral lines. He said the legislature has to be recalled to deal with the issue.

"We have to set up a tripartite committee to draw the boundaries like we always do so that people can have confidence that they're fair, that (members of the public) are effectively represented when they cast their ballot, and that we have a legitimate government after the next election."

Baillie said if the proper process isn't followed, the Liberal government risks an election that could be declared unconstitutional by the courts.

"We are looking at the legal options available to us at this time; I can't pick the one that we will go down quite yet," Baillie said.

+ RULING

In its decision, the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal found the previous NDP government violated the voting rights section of the Charter of Rights.

An election could come later this year.

Samson said the outcome of discussions with the federation will be made public, but the government won't reveal what is being said while talks are ongoing.

"To respect that I'm not going to get into the details of those discussions," said Samson.

Samson has previously said that the government is open to having an independent boundaries commission examine the province's 51 ridings. Normally, the commissions are appointed every 10 years, which under regular circumstances means the work wouldn't be undertaken until 2022.

But Samson has also said there is nothing in provincial legislation that prevents a commission from being formed earlier.

NDP Leader Gary Burrill said it's clear what needs to be done before an election is called.

"We think the court's judgment is clear that the present boundaries are unconstitutional," said Burrill. "Therefore the system we have for establishing boundaries should be instituted — there's lots of time to do it."

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Progressive Conservative Leader Jamie Baillie says the Liberal government risks an election that could be declared unconstitutional by the courts if the proper process isn't followed. METRO FILE

SCHOOLS

Minister denies no-fail policy, says hundreds failed in 2016

Nova Scotia's education minister says 259 students were failed last year from Primary to Grade 9 across the province.

Karen Casey revealed the number Thursday after being asked again to clarify whether or not there is a no-fail policy as part of the province's education system.

The issue was one of those raised by teachers as part of their recent contract dispute with the province.

Casey again reiterated that her department does not have a no-fail policy, and decisions on whether to pass or retain

students rests with individual teachers in consultation with parents and principals.

"We sent a letter of clarification to the boards hoping that would dispel that myth, but it is there and it's real," said Casey. "We have to make sure that teachers understand that students can be retained."

Casey said the numbers clearly show that some retentions do occur, although she admitted it is a small fraction in a system with upwards of 115,000 students.

As to why the misconception was allowed to develop, Casey said there was a "movement"

within the system over the last 15 years to move students along with their peers. She said that may have been interpreted as no failing students.

"Every teacher makes every effort to work with every student to ensure they get the skill set they need to move on," Casey said. "And there should be rare occasions when a student has to be retained at a particular grade level."

The Nova Scotia Teachers Union was adamant during the contract dispute that its members were feeling pressure not to fail students. THE CANADIAN PRESS

SHELBURNE

Concerns over fish kill disclosure

Nova Scotia's fisheries minister says he's concerned Cooke Aquaculture hasn't "gone to the public enough" about a recent fish kill at one of its salmon farming operations on the province's southwest shore.

Keith Colwell says the company informed him of some fish deaths at a Shelburne harbour site following two severe storms last month, but the company didn't mention numbers.

Colwell says he released information that an unknown number of fish had escaped from a pen, but didn't mention the deaths because he didn't feel it was relevant.

He says even though his department issued a statement earlier this week discussing a "higher than expected" mortality rate at the farm, he still hasn't seen an estimate from the company.

Colwell says an exact figure

+ CAUSE

Colwell says it's likely the kill was the result of the storms because testing has come up with no scientific reasons for the deaths.

won't be known until Cooke completes harvesting operations. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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This kid's a keeper: McLaren's 86-save performance

HOCKEY

Showstopping game scoring international attention

The story of Valley Wildcats goaltender Cole McLaren's 86 saves in a playoff game that stretched on for five overtime periods is spanning the globe.

The tale was even shared on Sports Illustrated's Facebook page.

It all happened at Berwick's Kings Mutual Century Centre the evening of March 5 — and into the morning March 6. The Wildcats were hosting the Halifax McDonald's for Game 4 of a Nova Scotia Major Midget Hockey League quarter-final series.

The teams had no idea what they were in for when the puck dropped at 7:30 p.m.

Players battled for 137 minutes — more than double the time it takes to play one regulation hockey game. The clock struck midnight and the scoreboard still read 1-1.

McLaren, 17, remembers feeling his legs burn as he went in and out of crouches and slid back and forth to block shot after shot.

"In the game you don't really even think about how long the game has been going. You feel the fatigue, obviously, but



In a quintuple overtime game against the Halifax McDonald's, Valley Wildcats goaltender McLaren made 86 saves. HANDOUT

your mind doesn't really seem to wander... you're just waiting for the next shot and trying to keep your team in it," he said in a phone interview March 8.

The Grade 11 Annapolis West Education Centre student made 49 saves in overtime alone. It was the Halifax McDonald's, however, that scored the decid-

ing goal. A blue line slap shot off the stick of defender John Nicholson sailed past traffic in front of McLaren's net, putting an end to the marathon hockey game in quintuple overtime when it reached its destination.

Halifax goalie Dakota Lund-Cornish stopped 59 of 60 shots, but it was McLaren's stats that went viral on social media.

The Lequille resident is a Halifax Mooseheads prospect, and was recently called up to practice with the QMJHL squad. He hopes to find his name on the Mooseheads roster next year.

TC MEDIA



I never expected the game and my performance in the game to blow up as much as it has on social media.

Halifax Mooseheads prospect Cole McLaren

DARTMOUTH

Police seeking suspect after dog stabbed in Highfield Park



Zane Woodford
Metro | Halifax

Police in Halifax are looking for a suspect after a scary incident in Highfield Park this week in which a dog was allegedly stabbed in the ear.

A girl was walking her dog with a friend on Pinecrest Drive on Monday afternoon when a man walked by and she heard her dog yelp, po-

lice said.

"When she looked down she noted her dog was bleeding from his ear and the girl said to the man, 'you just stabbed my dog,'" Halifax Regional Police spokesperson Const. Dianne Penfound said in an email.

Penfound said police weren't given a description of the weapon used and there were no witnesses to "the actual event of the dog being cut."

But a Facebook post warning

dog owners about the incident says, "a guy with a Samurai (sword) came from across the street, stabbed the dog and ran away." The post goes on to say that the dog is fine, but had to get stitches after "the sword went straight through his ear."

"Please keep your eyes out for this Lunatic!"

Police say the suspect is described as a white man about six feet tall with a slim build who was wearing a grey jacket and blue jeans at the time.



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ASYLUM

Canada urged to help those who sheltered Snowden

Lawyers for three families who sheltered Edward Snowden in Hong Kong say they have formally asked the Canadian government to grant them asylum.

They issued a statement Thursday saying that the families want to move to Canada because they face persecution in Hong Kong.

Snowden fled to Hong Kong to avoid prosecution over the leak of classified material about the U.S. government's surveillance programs.

A congressional inquiry into the former U.S. National Security Agency contractor concluded that he compromised national security by the leaks.

The families have been publicly quoted as saying they hid Snowden in their apartments for weeks in 2013 before he went to Russia.

Immigration Minister Ahmed Hussen's office did not immediately respond to an email on the matter.

A statement posted on the

website of "For the Refugees," a group set up to help the families, said it's critical for Canada to act quickly.

"These families, including three young and stateless children, face persecution in Hong Kong and in their home countries," the statement said.

"We are encouraged by Prime Minister Trudeau's commitment in taking a clear lead internationally in welcoming refugees," Canadian lawyer Marc-Andre Seguin said in the statement.

"It's up to Canada now to do the right thing," he said.

The lawyers said they filed refugee claims in January and are calling on Hussen to do what he can to speed up the applications.

Snowden remains in exile in Russia. He has been charged with espionage in the U.S. and could face 30 years in prison.

His lawyer has said he wants to return to the United States, if he could be guaranteed a fair trial.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Store employees, media, and supporters are seen outside the Cannabis Culture store on Church Street during a police raid in Toronto on Thursday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Pot activists charged after stores raided

LEGALIZATION

The Emerys own the Cannabis Culture brand across Canada

Prominent marijuana activists Marc and Jodie Emery were charged with multiple drug-related offences in Toronto on Thursday after police in several cities raided pot dispensaries associated with the couple.

The self-styled "Prince" and "Princess of Pot" were arrested at Toronto's Pearson International Airport on Wednesday evening. They appeared briefly in a courtroom on Thursday afternoon before police announced the full list of charges they faced.

Marc Emery faces 15 counts, including conspiracy to commit an indictable offence, trafficking, possession for the purpose of trafficking, and possession of proceeds of crime, while Jodie Emery is charged with five similar counts. The couple's Toronto lawyer said his clients were expected to appear in court Friday.

"My clients were uncertain of

what they'd been arrested for," Jack Lloyd said outside court on Thursday. "They're in good spirits ... hopeful that we can have a productive bail hearing tomorrow."

In Vancouver, another lawyer for the couple said they plan to fight the charges.

"We've been fighting this battle an awfully long time. And we're going to fight it right to the end. And I expect we're going to be victorious," said Kirk Tousaw.

Jodie Emery mouthed the words "I love you" to her husband during the couple's brief court appearance and flashed a peace sign to supporters in the room before being admonished by the justice of the peace.

The Emerys own the Cannabis Culture brand, which is used by a chain of 19 marijuana dispensaries in British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec.

Toronto police spokesman Mark Pugash said seven Cannabis Culture locations — five in Toronto, one in Hamilton and another in Vancouver — were searched on Thursday along with two homes in Toronto, one in Stoney Creek, Ont., and one in Vancouver.

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GENETIC NON-DISCRIMINATION BILL

Justice minister asking Supreme Court for advice

Justice Minister Jody Wilson-Raybould wants the Supreme Court of Canada to advise on the constitutionality of a bill aimed at preventing genetic discrimination.

The bill got final approval Wednesday when more than 100 Liberal

backbenchers rejected warnings from Wilson-Raybould and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau that the legislation is unconstitutional because it intrudes on provincial jurisdiction. A breach of the proposed law would result in a fine of up to \$1 million, or five years behind bars. THE CANADIAN PRESS

'My daughter in every way'

IMMIGRATION

Refugee trying to reunite with daughter left behind in China

In the early morning of March 28, 1997, Zuan Zhong and his wife heard crying at their doorway and found a baby girl in a red jumpsuit in a basket.

A red slip tucked under the newborn stated the baby's birth date and begged the family to look after the girl like their own because her biological parents could not afford to have another child in the household under China's then one-child policy.

The couple took the girl in, named her Shanrong and raised her without telling her she had been abandoned.

"I picked up the baby and she immediately stopped crying. It's a new life in my hand and I couldn't abandon her again," said Zhong, 45, now a Toronto resident. "Although we are not related by blood, she is my daughter in every way, in my flesh. She is an inseparable



China strictly controlled reproduction under its former one-child limit per couple policy. Immigration officials are not allowing a girl who was abandoned and raised by another family to reunite with her father in Canada, as they are not biologically related. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

part of the family."

However, Shanrong, now 20, is not part of the family according to Canadian immigration officials at the Hong Kong visa post, which refused to let the girl join him in Canada because a DNA test showed they're not biologically related.

Despite stacks of family photos since Shanrong was a

baby, her school records and personal ID listing the couple as her parents, the Immigration Department refused to reconsider the decision.

"A family cannot be just defined by your DNA," said lawyer Avvy Go of the Metro Toronto Chinese and Southeast Asian Legal Clinic, who successfully appealed against the visa offi-

cer's decision.

Zhong, a Catholic, fled China to Canada seven years ago and was granted asylum in 2013 on the grounds of religious persecution. He applied for permanent resident status the same year and included his wife and Shanrong as family members in the application.

In rejecting the visa post's

A family cannot be just defined by your DNA.

Avvy Go

decision, Federal Court Justice Keith Boswell said the officer had overlooked a Chinese government's certificate about the couple's relationship with the girl. "It unequivocally states that: the applicant was abandoned; has been living with Mr. Zhong and (his wife) since she was found; is a registered member in the household; and is in a de facto adoptive family relationship."

Zhong, who has not seen his wife and daughter since he fled China in 2010, was thrilled with the news but wonders how much longer it will take for his family to join him in Canada.

"The court has given us a new ray of hope, but there is still no guarantee the next visa officer will let Shanrong come," said Zhong. Both Zhong and Go hope the Immigration Department can fast-track the case.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

MONTREAL

President of Cora restaurants kidnapped

A man kidnapped at gunpoint under mysterious circumstances from his home near Montreal and later released is the president of the Cora breakfast restaurant chain, the company confirmed Thursday.

Nicholas Tsoufidis was nabbed Wednesday night in Mirabel, north of Montreal.

A passerby found the bound businessman in a ditch in Laval.

The witness told Montreal radio station 98.5 FM the victim didn't appear to know where he was and repeatedly stated he'd been kidnapped.

Quebec provincial police spokesman Sgt. Claude Denis said the victim was taken to hospital as a preventive measure.

Lucie Normandin, vice-president of the Cora Group, said it will be up to police to determine why Tsoufidis, 44, was kidnapped.

"Nicholas is fine," Normandin, adding she'd just spoken to him. "Like the news said, he was kidnapped and he was released. Someone found him."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

EDMONTON

Suspect in crowbar attack charged



Matt Kielytyka
Metro | Edmonton

The man accused of assaulting a woman with a crowbar, breaking both her arms, in a road rage incident Tuesday has been charged with attempted murder.

Edmonton police announced Thursday that a suspect, 28-year-old Jared Matthew Eliasson, has been arrested and faces several charges, including attempt to commit murder, possessing an offensive weapon dangerous to

the public and aggravated assault. He remains in custody.

As shocking as the crime was to the community, police say it spurred a number of tips.

"[The incident] did affect a lot of people and we're quite happy with the outcome," said Staff Sgt. Christa Pennie. "It was quite amazing to watch how everyone banded together. I'm still getting CrimeStopper tips."

Eliasson was arrested without incident, Pennie said.

The woman, 34, was driving when she approached a silver Pontiac Wave stopped in the

eastbound lane, according to a release. Police say she honked her horn, before passing the car. It is alleged the suspect vehicle followed her to a nearby residential address.

When she stopped and exited her car, the male suspect ran up to her and struck both her arms with a crowbar.

Police spokesperson Scott Pattison said it appeared the woman was injured trying to defend herself.

The victim required surgery from her extensive injuries and Pennie said she is still recovering.

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GOP versus Obamacare

MEDICAL AID

Big differences between new health care bill, previous laws

At first glance, the health care bill from House Republicans appears to have similarities to the Obama-era law, such as tax credits, protections for people with health problems and the ability of parents to keep young adults on their insurance.

But in most cases, those components would work very differently under the GOP framework than is now the case with the Affordable Care Act.

Important details about the Republican plan are unknown, including cost and coverage. Here's a look at the current law and the GOP's plan:

1 COVERAGE

Current law: About 11 million people are covered by expanded Medicaid in the 31 states that accepted it. Nationwide, an additional 12 million buy private health insurance through government-sponsored markets that offer plans with subsidized premiums. The national uninsured rate is below 9 per cent, a historic low.

GOP bill: Extent of coverage is unknown, as is the



House Speaker Paul Ryan uses charts and graphs to make his case for the GOP's long-awaited plan to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act, Thursday, during a news conference on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

impact on the uninsured rate.

2 PRIVATE COVERAGE

Current law: Provides income-based tax credits for consumers buying government-regulated plans through HealthCare.gov and state insurance markets. The most generous assistance goes to people with low-to-modest incomes. Many solid middle-class households get no help despite sharp increases in premiums.

GOP bill: Provides tax credits primarily based on age, gradually phasing down for individuals making more than \$75,000, or married couples earning more than \$150,000.

Credits can be used to buy any state-licensed health plan. More middle-class consumers will benefit, but there's concern lower-income people would be disadvantaged.

3 COST

Current law: Coverage costs of about \$1.4 trillion from 2017-2026, based on Congressional Budget Office estimates.

GOP bill: Unknown at this time; Republican aides say CBO numbers are coming.

4 PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS

Current law: Forbids insurers from turning people down

on account of medical problems, or charging them more money.

GOP bill: Provides protection for people with health problems. But consumers who have not maintained continuous insurance coverage face a 30 per cent premium penalty for a year. States can use federal funds to set up high-risk pools as insurers of last resort.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TRAVEL

New ban, new legal challenge

Legal challenges against President Donald Trump's revised travel ban mounted Thursday as Washington state said it would renew its request to block the executive order and a judge granted Oregon's request to join the case.

The events happened a day after Hawaii launched its own lawsuit, and Washington state Attorney General Bob Ferguson said New York state also asked to join his state's legal effort. Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey said the state is joining fellow states in challenging the revised travel ban.

Washington was the first state to sue over the original ban, which resulted in Judge James Robart in Seattle halting its implementation around the country. Ferguson said the state would ask Robart to rule that his temporary restraining order against the first ban applies to Trump's revised action. Robart granted Oregon's request to join Washington and Minnesota in the case opposing the travel ban.

Trump's revised ban bars new visas for people from six predominantly Muslim countries: Somalia, Iran, Syria, Sudan, Libya and Yemen. It also temporarily shuts down the U.S. refugee program. Unlike the initial order, the new one says current visa holders won't be affected.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Society's norms at risk in Trump's America

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD
From the U.S.



This week provided an excellent excuse to remember Donald Trump's egregious treatment of women. His pussy-grabbing claims and alleged sexual assaults. His attacks on women's looks. His indifference-turned-hostility to reproductive rights. His insistence that women in the military are to blame for their own sexual assaults.

Thank International

Women's Day for these helpful memory jolts, in case you'd forgotten it all amidst the political deluge, these 60 days of news cycles that feel as if we're living in a dump, staring up at the sky each morning wondering what stained mattress will fall next and how much it'll hurt.

Trump's election to the White House was a stunning example of the shredding of political norms in the U.S. — those guidelines of conduct and character that offer(ed), at the very least, the facade of respectability. Norms that might not

keep behaviour in check, but which, when discovered to have been violated, could once still ruin a politician's career.

But what about societal norms? Pluralism and the idea that we treat everyone equally are at risk. We're seeing it the increased bomb threats against Jewish community centres in Canada and the U.S., and in threats against Muslim mosques. We're seeing it in the murder of Srinivas Kuchibhotla in Kansas by a white man who'd asked if he was in the U.S. illegally.

Then there's the bizarre stories of U.S. border guards adopting a Trumpian approach to their jobs, opting for antagonism and suspicion over routine guidelines for who should and shouldn't be let in: turning away a Canadian woman hoping for a spa day in the U.S., detaining an Australian and a French author for making routine trips to give speeches, and detaining a Sudanese green-card-holding grad student with handcuffs at JFK airport.

Much has been said of how Trump's new executive order

on immigration compares to the last, but that debate ignores the fundamental shift already in place, a shift away from dependable rules, and toward inexplicable randomness. Even my white, green-card holding Canadian friend is cancelling a trip back home this summer, because why risk being turned away at the border?

In his campaign, Trump used America First as an economic message (ignoring the slogan's anti-Semitic history). But it's being heard as a much broader call to arms against everything

and everyone perceived un-American. It carries the underlying arrogance that everyone who's not American wishes they were, de facto demonizing all travellers to the U.S., that race and religion are good indicators of what America looks like.

These ideologies are spreading from Trump outwards. They are emboldening prejudice. As worried as people may be about what kind of politics will survive this presidency, another crucial question to ask is, what kind of society?

MIAMI

Lawyer's pants catch fire during arson case

A Miami defence attorney is feeling the heat after his pants caught fire Wednesday after he told jurors during arguments in an arson case that his client's car spontaneously combusted and wasn't intentionally set.

As he started speaking to the jury, Stephen Gutierrez, 28, said he noticed his pocket began to feel hot.

"When I checked my pocket, I noticed that the heat was coming from a small e-cigarette battery I had in my pocket," Gutierrez told The Associated Press via email on Thursday afternoon. He said he had two to three of the batteries in his right pocket.

The Miami Herald reported Gutierrez was arguing that his

client's car spontaneously combusted and wasn't intentionally set on fire.

Gutierrez said he quickly left the courtroom and went to a courthouse bathroom.

"I was able to toss the battery in water after it singed my pocket open," he said.

Gutierrez said the incident was not staged.

The lawyer ran out of the courtroom and the judge also had the jurors taken to the jury room.

When Gutierrez returned to the courtroom unharmed, he insisted it wasn't a staged defence gone wrong. Later in the day his client, Claudy Charles, 48, was convicted of second-degree arson. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DUESSELDORF

Seven injured in axe attack in Germany

A man was arrested after injuring seven people with an axe at the main train station in Duesseldorf, Germany in what appeared to be a random attack, police said Thursday.

Officers were alerted about an attack, prompting a large-

scale police response.

"A person, probably armed with an axe, attacked people at random," police said in a statement. Seven people were injured, three of them seriously, they said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



A mother and son explore a Lego city created by professional builder Jason Spears. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lego building momentum

FINANCES

Danish toy maker reports 6% increase in revenue

Danish toy maker Lego says its famous coloured toy blocks were in high demand in most regions last year, helping its full year revenue increase 6 per

cent to 37.9 billion kroner (\$5.4 billion US), the highest figure in the company's 85-year history.

The privately-held group's net profit rose to 9.4 billion kroner (\$1.3 billion US) from 9.2 billion kroner in 2015.

CEO Bali Padda said Thursday that he was "satisfied" with Lego's performance, adding that sales growth in the last six months of 2016 "was at more sustainable levels than previous years."

The toy maker was "encouraged" by sales in Europe, saw "strong potential" in China but sales were flat in U.S. markets.

"We will continue to work closely with our retail partners to identify new opportunities to innovate, drive growth and engage children in this important market," said Padda.

A British citizen, Padda took over on Jan. 1 from Joergen Vig Knudstorp, Lego's chief executive for the previous 12

years. The Dane, who in 2004 became the first non-family member to head the group, is credited with making the company profitable again.

"Innovation is critical to our success and each year around 60 per cent of our portfolio is new products," Padda said. The group said that, on the whole, about 75 billion Lego pieces were sold in 2016 in more than 140 countries.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Business digest

GOVERNMENT

Billions in infrastructure funds missing

The parliamentary budget watchdog says it can't find billions in new infrastructure spending that is supposed to be in key federal spending projections released this month. Estimates for the next 12 months were supposed to include \$8 billion in new infrastructure spending, but budget officer Jean-Denis Frechette says the documents only show \$5.5 billion. The report raises critical questions about a program that is a pillar of the government's economic plan. THE CANADIAN PRESS

INVESTMENT

Banks launch program to help smaller businesses

Canada's biggest banks and other financial institutions have launched a fund of up to \$1 billion over 10 years to help small- and medium-sized companies access capital to grow their businesses. The fund, which will be financed by the private sector and aims to fill the gap between investors and the public markets, will start at \$500 million for the first year. If demand is strong, it could be increased to \$1 billion over the nine years.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

150 WAYS of looking at Canada

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DECODED by Genna Buck and Andrés Plana

SUCKER-PUNCHING SUPERBUGS

Here's a sentence you never want to hear in the hospital: 'It's a superbug, and we're out of drugs to try.' Especially after a sick loved one has suffered through round after round of antibiotics, with gruesome side effects but no improvement. Superbugs are bacterial infections impervious to our most powerful medications. And they're on the rise. But a team of researchers at McMaster University has found a glimmer of hope in the fight against them, thanks to a very old drug.

How did they do it?

By taking a moonshot. Dr. Eric Brown and his team tested 1,440 drugs with expired patents (read: cheap drugs) against three of the gnarliest superbugs, both in a dish in the lab and in living mice. They found one that worked: **pentamidine**, a drug used since the 1930s to fight parasites.

Who are the bacterial bad guys?

The treatment crushed two scary superbugs:

Acinetobacter baumannii causes wound infections, UTIs, blood poisoning, meningitis and pneumonia.

Enterobacteria, a large group that includes **serratia**, is a UTI and wound-infection causing bug that likes to grow in damp, wet places. Unfortunately, that includes medical devices like catheters.

It also showed some promise against **Pseudomonas aeruginosa**, which, among other things, causes pneumonia in people with cystic fibrosis.

Why did it work?

The three superbugs in this study all belong to a group called **gram-negative bacteria**, which have a tough outer shell. Because of that shell, few antibiotics work on them to begin with. So when they become antibiotic-resistant, it really spells trouble. The scientists found that pentamidine punches holes in bacteria's shells, so when it's given in combination with antibiotics — which normally wouldn't work — the superbugs didn't stand a chance.

So is the problem fixed?

Not even close. The drug combination will have side-effects, and it hasn't been tried in humans yet. However, Brown speculated that doctors might start trying pentamidine pretty soon: When you're dealing with a superbug, there's not a whole lot to lose.

FINDINGS

Your week in science



MONSTROUS CONTROVERSY

The ultra-weird Tully Monster didn't have a backbone, says a new paleontology paper. The authors of a 2016 study who thought they saw a spine were actually looking at a gut, the paper claims. The 300 million-year-old species looks like a cross between a lobster, hammerhead shark and worm.

TIMELESS MATTER

It's a mind-bending finding, confirmed by peer review: **Time crystals**, which vibrate without energy and have a structure that repeats itself in space and in time, are real.

SOUND SMART



DEFINITION

An **extremophile** is a living thing, usually a micro-organism like bacteria, that has adapted to live in extreme conditions such as intense heat, acidity, cold or pressure.

USE IT IN A SENTENCE

Deborah likes to surf in hurricanes. You could say she's an extremophile, or possibly just nuts.

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CITIZEN SCIENTIST by Genna Buck

I've changed my mind: Aliens are awesome

Last month I went to the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of science, a.k.a. the science fair of planet Earth. It was so literally awesome: It filled me with awe.

I went to a talk by Penelope Boston, head of astrobiology at NASA. She studies species that live in our most extreme environments, such as sulphur-spewing caves. Pretty crazy in Earth terms, but par for the course on other planets.

Everywhere she looks, there's life. Even deep inside rock for-

mations, where there are vast colonies of microbes that look like tiny cauliflower and cacti. They don't seem to share much DNA with any known life forms. Boston believes there's life on other planets, and it probably looks something like those rock critters.

The last time I wrote about aliens, I dismissed them as "looking something like pond scum."

I don't know where I got this "multi-cellular and sentient or BUST" attitude. Possibly from watching Space Jam one too

many times as a child. But the presentation helped me recognize it as prejudice. Alien microbes are not too small for me to care about; I'm too big and dumb to appreciate them.

Their existence raises huge issues. An upcoming NASA mission will look for life on Jupiter's watery moon Europa. And it's urgent that we plan what to do if we find it, Kevin Hand of NASA said.

Devastation reigned when humans decided it was a bright idea to mix micro-organisms from

different continents. What could happen if we brought European germs to Earth? Or the reverse? We could destroy an ecosystem before we get to study it. In Hand's words, "We must keep Europa for Europeans."

I never thought of that before. There's nothing better than thinking about something for the first time. That's awe. And the more time I spend hanging out with scientists, the more I get.

Science Question?

genna.buck@metronews.ca

History of an island fit for a king

IN FOCUS

Eight decades after first visit, we still don't belong there

Richard Crouse
For Metro Canada



Only two things are sure about Skull Island. First, it is home to Megaprimatus kong a.k.a. King Kong and a menagerie of prehistoric creatures. Second, as Mason Weaver (Brie Larson) says in this weekend's Kong: Skull Island, "We don't belong here."

The latest adventures of King Kong take place almost entirely on the island but what, exactly, do we know about the place?

Not much, because Skull Island is uncharted and changes from film to film.

In the new movie, a digital map image suggests the island derived its intimidating name from its gorilla skull profile shape but originally the isle wasn't called Skull Island. The best-known versions of the Kong story, the original 1933 Merian C. Cooper film and the 1976 Dino De Laurentiis production, never mention Skull Island.

The first movie and its subsequent novelisation describe a "high wooded island with a skull-



King Kong's island kingdom has had many names and been located all over the world over the years. HANDUTS

like knob" called Skull Mountain while the '76 film refers to Beach of the Skull. It wasn't until 2004's Kong: King of Skull Island illustrated novel that the name was first used. Since then the moniker has stuck. The same can't be said for its location.

Over the years it's been pegged everywhere from the coast of Indonesia and southwest of Central America to the Bermuda Triangle and the Coral Sea off the east coast of Australia.

In reality many places have

subbed in for the island. In 1933 several locations were pieced together to create Kong's home.

Outdoor scenes were shot at Long Beach, California and the

caves at Bronson Canyon near Griffith Park in Los Angeles. Everything else was filmed on a soundstage in Culver City using odds and ends from other sets.

The giant Skull Mountain gate was later reused in Gone with the Wind's burning of Atlanta sequence.

De Laurentiis spared no expense bringing the island to life in 1976, moving the entire crew to the Hawaiian island of Kauai.

The shoot began at the remote Honopu Beach, a place the crew were told was deserted. Arriving in four helicopters laden with equipment they were greeted by a honeymooning couple who, thinking they had the place to

themselves, had slept nude on the beach.

The impressive stone arch seen in the film — "Beyond the arch, there is danger, there is Kong!" — was natural and so huge years later when an episode of Acapulco Heat was filmed there a helicopter flew underneath it.

Peter Jackson's 2005 King Kong reboot used a combination of New Zealand's picturesque Shelly Bay and Lyall Bay as Skull Island's "jungle from hell." In the film's closing credits the director paid tongue-in-cheek tribute to all the stars of the 1933 movie, calling them, "The original explorers of Skull Island."

This weekend's installment was shot in Vietnam, Queensland, Australia and Kualoa Ranch, Hawaii, where giant sets were built near where Jurassic World was filmed.

The scenery, as John Goodman's character says, is "magnificent," but there was also a practical reason to shoot in these exotic locations. The Hollywood Reporter stated the production shot in Australia to take advantage of a whopping 16.5% location offset incentive — i.e. tax break — offered by the Australian government.

Kong: Skull Island describes the isle as "a place where myth and science meet." On film though, it's a spot where the imaginations of Kong fans run wild.



MOVIE RATINGS by Richard Crouse

Kong: Skull Island ★★★★★
The Last Word ★★
Window Horses ★★★

HOW RATING WORKS
★★★★★ SEE IT
★★★★ WORTHWHILE
★★★ UP TO YOU
★ SKIP IT

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Kevan Funk's drama *Hello Destroyer* has been nominated for four honours at this weekend's Canadian Screen Awards including best picture and best actor for Jared Abrahamson. CONTRIBUTED

Enforcing us to confront our bloodlust

INTERVIEW

Hello Destroyer tackles violence in hockey...and far beyond it

Steve Gow
For Metro Canada



The forthcoming sequel to *Goon* may be getting most of the attention, but there is another hockey movie hitting theatres — even if the filmmaker doesn't particularly want it defined as such.

"I just knew I wanted to look at violence in an institutionalized way and so I needed a big

organization," insisted Kevan Funk about his debut feature film, *Hello Destroyer*. "And hockey is the biggest cultural institution in this country."

The terse drama may be gaining praise for its honest portrayal of Canada's most popular game, but the tale of a young player whose grisly in-game act of violence sends his life into a tailspin is winning critics for its take on our relationship with aggression in sport.

"I make films that are meant to be divisive to some degree," admits Funk, acknowledging his drama may initially turn off the game's traditionalists. "(But) it's not an anti-hockey film. It's not even an anti-fighting film because it doesn't

really comment so much on the violence of the game as much as the institutionalization of that violence.

"Sure there's going to be people who take it at first glance and go 'f— this movie, you've got to keep fighting in the game' but that's not even the conversation we're having."

In that sense, Funk's use of hockey was admittedly a "red herring" intended to reach beyond the mere bloodlust of watching two enforcers eat each other's fists.

In fact, that astute insight has afforded *Hello Destroyer* and Funk no less than four nominations (including best picture) at this weekend's Canadian Screen Awards.

While the movie may be

a longshot, it's an incredible accomplishment for the Banff-bred filmmaker.

Also nominated is lead actor Jared Abrahamson (Netflix's *Travellers*) who has stuck by Funk ever since *Destroyer* began as a short film in 2013. Now with more than eight projects in the works and Hollywood success on the horizon, Abrahamson has extolled Funk for his forthcoming fame.

"A lot of my directing style has to do with giving actors space," admits Funk, shirking the credit. "I equate it to coaching in a way — you choose the best players for your team, you know what they can do (and) then create the best conditions which are best suited to those people."

BEHIND THE SCENES

Destroying the rest of the Competition

"The weird thing about the hockey movie as an entity is that most of the time, they have very little to say about hockey," said Kevan Funk. "Those films are so detached from any reality; they're just this very strange fantasy world."

Funk's Favorite Canuck Film

"Fubar has that badass unabashed boldness of being truly Canadian and I love that," said Funk of the cult-hit from *Goon*-director

Michael Dowse. "I want to see more of that across all genres."

The Uncredited Star

Shot primarily in Prince George, B.C., Funk insists the town played as much a character as the actors. "There's something about having the fabric of that place and your cast and crew living there that shows up on-screen in sometime intangible and invisible ways," said Funk. "But I think that are essential ways."

STEVE GOW/FOR METRO

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INTERVIEW

Russell's trip down memory lane

There was a time when an interview with Wyatt Russell would take place in a locker room, not a plush downtown Toronto hotel suite.

The *Goon*: Last of the Enforcers star not only plays a hockey player in the film, he was once a junior league goalie who says his first vivid memory was getting a pair of skates when he was just three years old. Hockey, he says, "was my love, my passion."

His promising athletic career was cut short by multiple concussions and an injury-plagued season in the Netherlands with Groningen Grizzlies, but the thirty-year-old fell right back into rink life on his first day of shooting *Goon*.

"We were supposed to be getting off a bus after a game to meet our family members," he says. "I remember sitting



Wyatt Russell played for numerous amateur hockey teams before quitting the sport. CONTRIBUTED

down and being like, 'This is what I did.' It was actors acting, but I thought, 'I've done this. I've already done this.' I looked over to my left and they start filling in the bus with players that would fill out the team and there was a guy right next to me and I was like, 'Dylan?'

"I had played with him for a

little while in Brampton. After that moment it became really easy and fun to slip back into hockey and hockey terminology. It's a world. It was what I wanted to do with my life."

The son of actors Goldie Hawn and Kurt Russell says he met many people like the violent enforcer Anders Cain he plays in the film. Cain doesn't love the game, he loves to win — a perspective that comes when players get jaded, Russell says.

"They have a lot of talent. They've had a lot of talent since they were kids and there has been a lot of pressure put on them. For a lot of people there's a breaking point and the way that usually manifests itself is through self-destructive behaviour and they don't even know they're doing it."

RICHARD CROUSE/METRO

Reilly: 'There's no future in war'

INTERVIEW

Versatile actor finds time to be philosophical on Skull Island

Actor John C. Reilly's castaway character in Kong: Skull Island, a scruffy longbeard named Hank Marlow, brings to mind Dennis Hopper's crazed jungle cameraman character in Apocalypse Now.

Hank also looks like how the Skipper from Gilligan's Island might appear after the proverbial "three-hour tour" turns into decades of being lost.

Such comparisons certainly apply, Reilly allows over the phone from a tour stop in London. But he suggests a left-field one he thinks is more on the money: the wily orphan girl Newt in Aliens, played by Carrie Henn, who helps Sigourney Weaver's Ripley fight deep space invaders.

"Like Newt, Hank is someone who's been left for dead who has survived somehow and who has been driven half crazy by the experience — but who is going to survive, no matter what," Reilly says. "Hank is also the character who gets to call out the elephant in the room (about the dangers of Skull Island). I love characters like that, those people who are apart from the rest of the group with a unique point of view."

The 51-year-old Reilly certainly hasn't gone unnoticed, in a 27-year screen career that has seen him do memorable characters both comic (Walk Hard, Talledega Nights, Step Brothers) and serious (Magnolia, The Thin Red Line, The Aviator).

You've done blockbusters before, but I'm guessing this one tested your ability to artistically stare up into the sky.

(Laughs) Yes, definitely! The effects guys would show us these little rough animations to give us an idea of what the actual action was that we're looking at, but that was nothing to seeing it for the first time on the screen. That's another fun thing about doing one of these effects-heavy movies. I get to be an audience member like everybody else! I've never seen it either! So when I sit down, it's a great surprise and a delight to me.

Were you delighted when you saw the finished version of the film?

I've seen it twice and I was really relieved that it was so good, because you never know. These big-budget things can oftentimes get off track and lose their way from start to finish. But this really held together in a way that surprised even me. I didn't realize the emotional resonance that Kong was going to have. That was something that was hard to predict until you actually saw the finished creatures ... I showed the movie to a bunch of people I was working with when I first saw it, and it was unanimous, everyone was just walking out, being like, 'We've gotta save Kong!'

I love this notion of balance in the world, how important balance is, and how we have to be careful about exerting our will and throwing off the balance of the natural world around us. I think that's really relevant to current audiences.

When you talk about being

relevant, are you thinking of this as being some sort of a message movie?

I think it's a message movie if you want it to be a message movie. The truth is, it's just a really fun movie. It's a popcorn movie; you get caught up in the excitement and the emotion. And then afterwards, like any good movie, it can resonate for you in your own life, which I think is a good

thing. I think a lot of times people dismiss "popcorn movies" because they say, "Well, I walked out of there and I just didn't think about it again. It immediately left my mind when I left the theatre." I think this movie has a little bit more going for it than that. I found myself thinking about how it related to my life, and how it related to the world.

The temptation might be to read Trumpian things into the film, even though it was made before Donald J. Trump was elected president.

I think that's our current obsession: reading Trumpian things into everything around us. I was reading Trumpian things into the World Series this year! But I think the themes of this movie are bigger than any kind of current

political stuff. I think what we're talking about is the balance of the world, not just some political party or some election. We're talking about the bigger picture of things. The only way we're getting out of this world alive is if we all cooperate with each other, because there's no future in war. I think that's a pretty universal and non-partisan point of view. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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John C. Reilly says Kong: Skull Island director Jordan Vogt-Roberts gave him freedom to improvise. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

His journey to sing on stage with Bono

DOCUMENTARY

Patrick Stark wanted to conquer his fears on film

Gilles LeBlanc
For Metro Canada

A wise person once said, 'If you're going to dream, dream big'. They also must have said that if you have a fear to conquer, go even bigger. This is the message Patrick Stark obviously heard.

"For most of my life to the age of forty, I would consider myself a phobic person," the British Columbian filmmaker explains.

"I knew that I was terrified of singing in front of anybody."

Despite his at times crippling anxiety of being heard

in public, Mr. Stark decided in 2009 to take a giant leap forward when he saw posters promoting U2's 360° Tour. "Do I want to live the rest of my life living in fear of trying things?"

Wanting to set a sky-high bar for himself as well as be an example for his kids, Stark concocted the most improbable and frightening of scenarios — singing on stage with Bono at BC Place stadium. Karaoke simply wouldn't do.

It is a journey he has been documenting under the title of *One Life No Regrets*, which Stark hopes to release after May 12, 2017. That date just happens to be when U2 kicks off their next gargantuan-sized excursion in Vancouver commemorating U2's fifth studio album, *The Joshua Tree*, which turned 30 years old on March 9.

Because Stark courageously opened the door for any opportunities that arose, the



Singalongs to U2's *Under a Blood Red Sky* helped filmmaker Patrick Stark discover his voice and inspired his journey to sing with the band. CONTRIBUTED

former X-Files production assistant came awfully close to realizing his dream in 2015.

Through a friend's tip, he found himself pitching the legendary rock group at a Gastown restaurant, to which Bono casually replied, "Sure. What are you doing Friday night?"

Unfortunately for him B.B.

King died, putting off his big break so U2 could play *When Love Comes to Town* in tribute to the blues great.

While there hasn't been any communication in the time since, Stark is hopeful Bono is a man of his word and won't forget the promise he made.

Why these Irishmen? It was

singing along to an *Under a Blood Red Sky* cassette tape in his car where Stark discovered his own voice. There is no desire to pursue any kind of second career past overcoming this phobia.

If it doesn't come to pass, that'll be OK with Stark as just "by going on the journey, you actually start to come a lot closer than you could ever imagine."

His biopic isn't like *My Date with Drew* or "the ultimate selfie-taker at a concert"; interviews from music producers Steve Lillywhite and Daniel Lanois are threaded alongside spiritual teachings courtesy of Eckhart Tolle and *The Secret Prayer* author Dr. Joe Vitale, who instilled in Stark that "always choosing safe is not living."

Look up *One Life No Regrets* on Facebook or follow his @mrnoregrets Twitter handle if you're as curious as I am to see how this all turns out.

I know I'm pulling for Patrick Stark to get to do his perfect U2 song choice, *Stuck in a Moment You Can't Get Out Of*.

FAMOUS FEARS

Celebrities can have fears just like the rest of us.

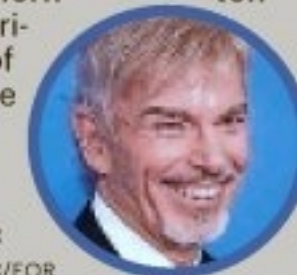
• Sing star Matthew McConaughey is afraid of revolving doors and tunnels.



• Mirrors apparently upset the forever-photogenic Pamela Anderson.



• If you can believe this one, Billy Bob Thornton is "petrified" of antique furniture.



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“Do I want to live the rest of my life living in fear of trying things?”
Patrick Stark, filmmaker



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A CASH-SAVING SOLUTION FOR RESTAURANT OWNERS

Local business offers low-cost paper food packaging products

For businesses in the restaurant and food service sectors, packaging products are a significant cost.

It's essential that these businesses always have lots on hand and in many different varieties, such as takeout containers, plastic cups, bags and wraps, aluminum foil, napkins, foam cups and freezer wrap.

The cost of these products hits the bottom lines of many restaurants hard.

"A lot of these businesses can't grow because of the high cost of the materials," says Reza Khanbabaie, the co-owner of Paper Plus, a new Burnside business that sells packaging products.

After seeing that firms were spending too much on packaging, Khanbabaie saw an opportunity to better serve the market. He and his partners went about planning the business

for years, negotiating deals with factories to produce the products.

Khanbabaie says these factories are only interested in doing high-volume work.

"If you want to get them at a good price from the factory, you have to order them in huge amounts," he says.

Because of the high product volumes Paper Plus has secured, it can offer its customers significant savings over the competition, up to 70 per cent in some cases, says Khanbabaie.

It's important to note these products aren't any different than what the competition is selling. "The products that we carry are the exact same that are available in the market," says Khanbabaie.

Paper Plus has access to 1,500 products, of which 700 are always carried in stock from its location at 20 Wright Avenue, units 6 and 7, in Burnside. It has a showroom displaying the product and its warehouse is also on site.

Besides restaurant packaging products, the company also carries paper products like toilet paper, paper towels and printer paper, which is



Paper Plus carries 700 restaurant packaging products at its Burnside location, and has access to another 800 products. CONTRIBUTED

something most businesses need.

Free delivery is offered twice a week on orders of more than \$150. With the warehouse on site, people can also just pick up their items from the loading bay.

In the future, the business owners hope to build a manufacturing plant here to produce

their products. Doing this would aid the local economy, employ more people in the community and ensure the business has quicker access to the product lines it sells.

Paper Plus is open Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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The great baseball tour

With one major league baseball team in Canada, when it comes to home plate pride, it's hard to root, root, root for Toronto's Rogers Centre. It is unbearably stuffy when the retractable roof is closed, the food and drink options are often overpriced and underwhelming, and, well, that whole beer-can throwing incident last season didn't help its rep. Fans don't hate the centre as much as, say, Barry Bonds, but it's a close call for many. Celebrate the arrival of spring with a road trip and visit these stadiums where taking in the ol' ballgame is always a homerun. **Melissa Dunne** FOR METRO



ALL PHOTOS ISTOCK

CHICAGO

Wrigley Field

The Chicago Cubs broke a 108-year losing streak last fall, bringing the pennant back to Wrigley Field in Chicago's North Side. The famed stadium, built in 1914, is guaranteed to be buzzing with excitement this season. Soak in the beauty of the ivy-covered outfield walls while getting buzzed off a cup of local craft beer.



SAN DIEGO

Petco Park

Take in a game with the San Diego Padres while soaking up the warm California sun shining down on you. The food here is said to be so-so. But what Petco Park lacks in culinary finesse it makes up for in craft beer. Make sure to make your way up to the fifth floor where local brewery, Stone Brewing Co., has a palm-tree adorned outdoor beer garden.



BALTIMORE

Oriole Park at Camden Yards

The home of the Baltimore Orioles is in the heart of this gritty city. The grub here is so good you'll be hoping for extra innings, just so you can go back for more. The stadium offers everything from tacos to pizza to a namesake-barbecue joint opened by former All-Star Boog Powell.



SAN FRANCISCO

AT&T Park

This park is also named after a telecom company, but that's where the similarities with Rogers Centre ends. The beloved home of the San Francisco Giants has a beautiful view of the chichi city's bay. Don't leave without getting a selfie with the giant statue of a replica vintage 1927 four-fingered baseball mitt.



BOSTON

Fenway Park

You may want to leave your Jays jersey at home when you visit Major League Baseball's oldest stadium. Boston Red Sox fans are renowned for, er, being passionate, but it's worth the razzing to see the Green Monster in person. Find the energy to razz Sox fans right back with a Fenway Frank.

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Guiding Lonely Planet into the digital age

INTERVIEW

Houghton named CEO of popular travel guides at 24

Daniel Houghton was just 24 years old when he became CEO of Lonely Planet in 2013. Since then, he's restructured the company, expanded its digital presence and, to the surprise of many who feared he'd kill off Lonely Planet guidebooks, he's grown the print side of the business. The company now has 33 per cent of the guidebook market, its largest share ever. Houghton, now 28, starts his fourth year with the company in April.

Houghton's roots are in the South — he grew up outside Atlanta and holds a photojournalism degree from Western Kentucky University. But you could say travel is a family tradition: His parents worked for airlines and his grandparents toured the lower 48 states in an Airstream camper in the 1970s.

Houghton is based in Nashville, Tennessee, now, but last year he travelled some 150,000 miles for Lonely Planet, and the

year before that, 300,000 miles.

What are some of the changes at Lonely Planet since you took over?

We've completely rebuilt the entire digital platform along with a suite of mobile products. We've just really tried to expand our content coverage as much as possible: food, adventure travel, we've launched a whole line of kids' content.

Travel is really much more than 'I'm about to go get on a very long-haul flight and take my guidebook.' That's obviously a very large part of our audience. ... But we've set the business up to reach people on as many platforms as we can. Whether they find something that we put on Instagram, or they see our magazine in the airport, or they visit our website because they Googled where to go in Italy and we're the No. 1 or 2 organic search result, we want to get that content in front of as many people as possible.

You were hired to run Lonely Planet by Brad Kelley, the billionaire who bought the company from the BBC. How did that come about?



Lonely Planet CEO Daniel Houghton at a rooftop bar in New York. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

We got to meet pretty randomly a couple years before Lonely Planet. I was in the right place at the right time and very fortunate to have that opportunity. We met a few times and he offered me a job.

What were you doing before Lonely Planet?

At the time I was frustrated

with the newspaper industry. I had started my own one-man band, a multimedia company doing everything from shooting pilots of TV shows to commercial work.

Kelley bought the company from the BBC at a fraction of what it had sold for a few years earlier. Is Lonely Planet

profitable now?

We're certainly moving in the right direction. We're proud of what we've achieved and we don't really comment on the rest of it.

Had you travelled the world before Lonely Planet?

I'd been a lot of places but I hadn't been to Asia and I've

never been to Antarctica. Every other continent I had been to a couple of times — a lot of vacations and both my parents worked for the airlines. Until I turned 21, I had a free ticket.

I grew up travelling with the family. My mom's idea of a really fun vacation was, 'Let's go to New Hampshire to see all of the covered bridges in the whole state.' As a 10- or 12-year-old, that's not radically exciting. But it is when you get given a camera: 'Maybe I'll take a picture of every one of them.'

Are there places you haven't been that you want to go?

Last year we had a book called The Ultimate Travel List. We had Angkor Wat at No. 1. I've never been there. I'd love to see that. I'd love to go to Myanmar. Vietnam.

How many countries have you been to?

I'm somewhere north of 35 but not more than 45.

How many states?

I've got one state left. I have not been to Hawaii. Of all the ones, right? THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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metr SPORTS

One year after signing a four-year deal with Houston, Brock Osweiler was traded by the Texans to the Cleveland Browns

Tigers advance, Huskies eliminated at nationals

BASKETBALL

Dalhousie draws Ryerson in next round

The Carleton Ravens opened defence of their Canadian university men's basketball championship with an 85-69 victory over Calgary on Thursday at Scotiabank Centre in Halifax.

But it was the host Dalhousie Tigers who stole the show in quarter-final action as the fifth seeds upended the No. 4 Alberta Golden Bears 67-65 thanks to a game-winning shot as time wound down.

The news wasn't as good for the No. 8 Saint Mary's Huskies, who gave the top-seeded Ryerson Rams a scare but ended up falling 79-70.

In the Dalhousie win, Karshrell Lawrence was the hero for the black and gold as he scored the game-winning layup with no time remaining.

Lawrence finished with 28 points and 10 rebounds as the Tigers advance to face Ryerson in semifinal play Saturday at

3:30 p.m.

The other semi Saturday pits the third-ranked McGill Redmen against Carleton, which has won six consecutive Canadian titles and a record 12 overall.

"When it really came down to it in the fourth quarter, I thought our depth did some positive things and I think they wore down a bit on the defensive end," said Carleton head coach Dave Smart. "I think that's a credit to how hard we work throughout to turn it into a 40-minute game."

Carleton, the No. 2 seed behind top-ranked Ryerson, had a 17-point lead before the seventh-seeded Dinos clawed back to cut the Ravens' lead to 62-57 to end the third quarter. The Ravens outscored Calgary 23-12 in the fourth to secure the victory.

McGill booked its spot in Saturday's semifinal with a 63-53 victory over No. 6 Manitoba.

McGill and Carleton open semifinal play at 1 p.m.

Sunday's final is set for 2 p.m. Against the No. 1 seeds, the Huskies went shot for shot with Ryerson, bringing the game to as close as one point with just over two minutes to play, before the Rams would seal the deal on the strength of six straight points from guard Adika Peter-McNeilly.

Guard Ammanual Diressa led the way offensively, with 24 points.

THE CANADIAN PRESS AND METRO



Marquis Clayton, left, of the Saint Mary's Huskies tries to get past the Ryerson Rams' Myles Charvis during quarter-final action at the U Sports Final 8 at the Scotiabank Centre on Thursday. JEFF HARPER/METRO

BRIER

Playoff spots still up for grabs

The pre-tournament favourites are playing like contenders this week at the Tim Hortons Brier.

The round robin has essentially gone as expected in St. John's, N.L., with top skips like Brad Gushue, Kevin Koe, Mike McEwen and Brad Jacobs battling for position near the top of the leaderboard.

Jean-Michel Menard and John Morris were also in the playoff hunt heading into the final draw Friday morning.

"I think that's the way Canadian men's curling is," McEwen said. "You've got about a half dozen teams and if you run this over and over and over again, you might get six different winners depending on the week."

No playoff matchups had been set after Thursday night's games.

Gushue won twice Thursday day to give Newfoundland and Labrador (8-2) a spot in the Page playoff 1-2 game. Several scenarios are still in play and seedings are still up in the air for all four playoff spots.

If tiebreakers are needed, they will be played Friday afternoon.

McEwen split his games to leave Manitoba at 8-2 after 16 draws. Jacobs and Northern Ontario (8-3) also reached the eight-win mark.

Menard guided his Quebec team to a pair of wins to improve to 7-3.

Kevin Koe, also the reigning world champion, fell to 7-3. He will play New Brunswick's Mike Kennedy (1-9) on Friday.

Morris's British Columbia rink is 7-4. THE CANADIAN PRESS



Brad Gushue's Newfoundland and Labrador rink won two matches Thursday to earn a playoff berth. THE CANADIAN PRESS

WORLD BASEBALL CLASSIC

Bautista powers Dominican victory

Jose Bautista homered and drove in four runs, and the Dominican Republic opened its bid for a second consecutive World Baseball Classic title with a 9-2 victory against Canada.

Wellington Castillo hit a two-run homer for the Dominicans, who went 8-0 to win the 2013 title.

The Canadians are in danger of being eliminated in the opening round for the fourth time in as many WBCs.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Jose Bautista, right, hit a three-run homer Thursday in Miami. GETTY IMAGES

IN BRIEF

Herman takes early lead at Valspar Championship

Jim Herman played bogey-free golf en route to a 9-under 62 and a two-shot lead at the Valspar Championship on Thursday in Palm Harbor, Fla.

Herman putted for birdie on all but two holes, and all but one of the birdie putts were from 15 feet or close.

British Open champion Henrik Stenson and Russell Henley carded scores of 64. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NHL

Leafs' Andersen keeps Flyers at bay

The Toronto Maple Leafs' playoff push got a big boost on Thursday night.

Frederik Andersen made 36 saves and Tyler Bozak had a goal and an assist as the Leafs jumped back into the final wild-card spot with a 4-2 win over the Philadelphia Flyers.

Toronto now has 74 points — one up on the New York Islanders before they took on the Canucks in Vancouver later in the night.

William Nylander, Mitch

THURSDAY in Toronto



Marner and Nazem Kadri also scored for the Leafs (30-22-14), who entered the night just two points up on the Flyers (31-27-8). Toronto has won two straight after dropping five in a row. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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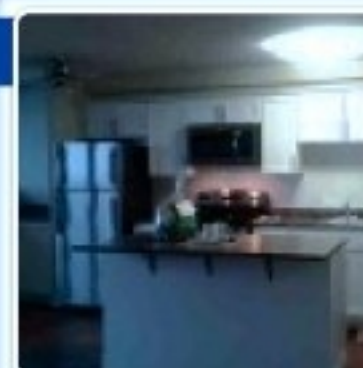
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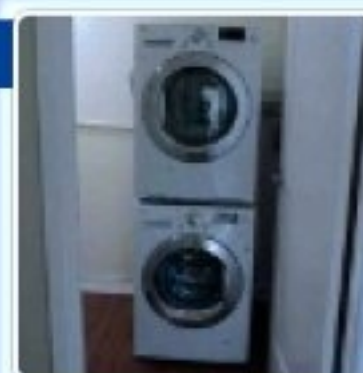
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MAKE IT TONIGHT

Instagram-level Waffled Avocado Grilled Cheese



PHOTO: MAYA VISNVEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

Raise your grilled cheese game to Instagram levels with this pretty twist on a lazy dinner classic.

Ready in 15 minutes

Prep time: 5 minutes
Cook time: 10 minutes
Serves: 2

Ingredients

- 4 slices of whole grain bread
- butter
- 1/2 avocado
- small handful of fresh cilantro
- salt
- 1/2 cup shaved Monterey Jack cheese

Directions

1. On a cutting board, lay out bread slices. Spread butter on one side of each slice of bread.

2. In a small bowl, mash avocado, cilantro and salt to taste. Spread a heaping tablespoon of avocado mix on two slices of bread and sprinkle with cheese. Add cheese to the other plain slices of bread.

3. Place grilled cheese in waffle maker and cook according to machine's directions for a waffle. Repeat for the second sandwich.

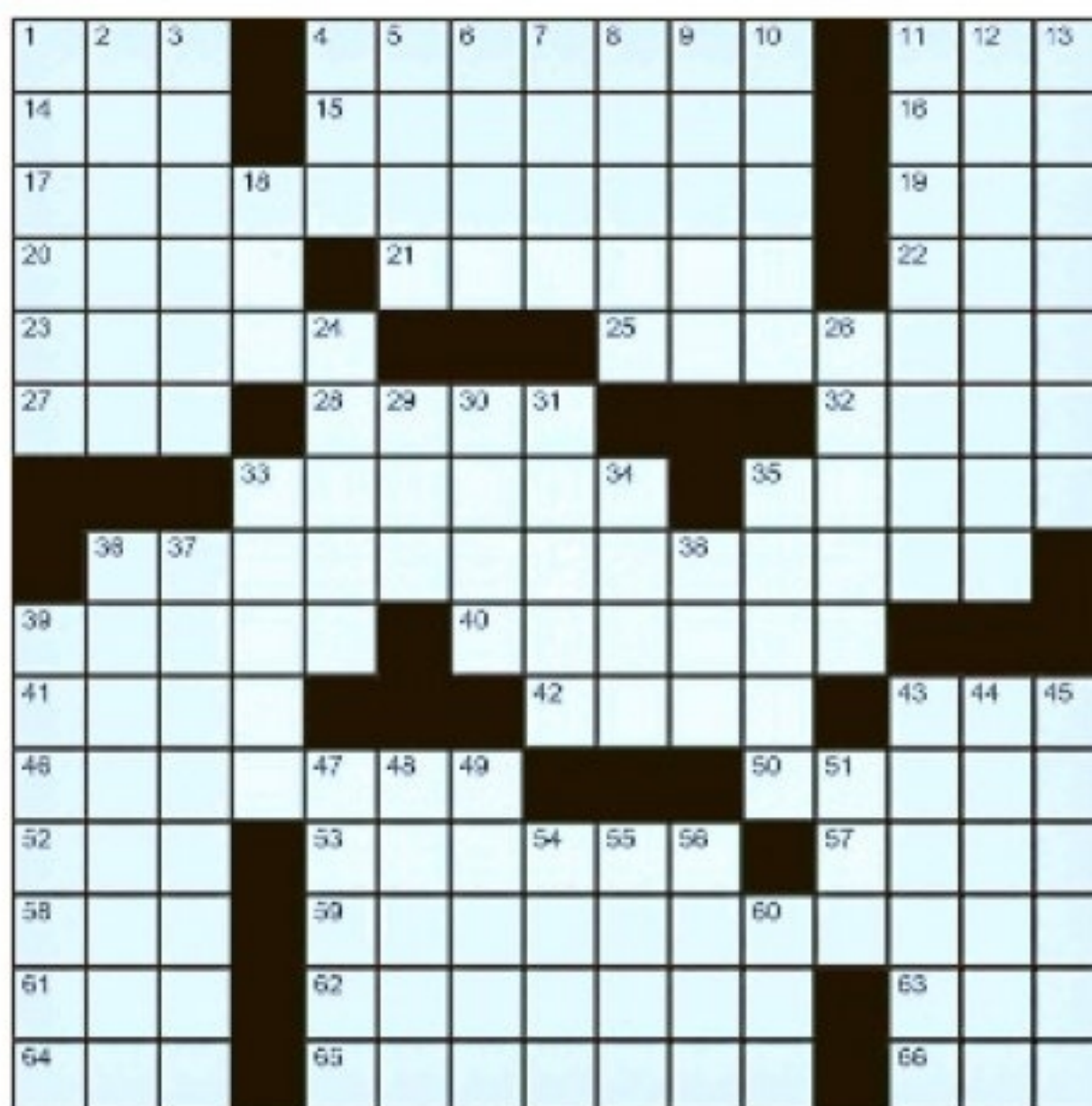
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CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN

ACROSS

1. Laughing one's laughs
4. Lose effectiveness as tape on paper
11. Vital life energy
14. Inclined
15. "The Ghost and Mrs. Muir" (1947) actress Gene
16. Tavern drink
17. Northwest Territories town on the Mackenzie River where Imperial Oil has had operations for almost a century: 2 wds.
19. Pixie
20. Happiness
21. Red-tagged in the store: 2 wds.
22. Universal ideal
23. Country singer Mr. Jackson's
25. Doesn't get better
27. CD-__
28. Converse
32. First Nation of Manitoba
33. Virgil epic
35. Earths
36. As per #59-Across, Feist dances along this airport mechanism: 2 wds.
39. "Me" by Nickelback
40. Canis Major's bright star
41. Shades
42. Ice floe denizen
43. Gusto
46. Getting-dressed person
50. Tamarack __ (NWT's official tree)
52. UK military fliers
53. Go by, as time



57. Court plea, __ contendere
58. White House nickname
59. Feist song for which the music video is set in an airport: 4 wds.
61. Cost
62. Hopeful human
63. Apple __

64. Craze
65. #63-Across, for one
66. Attempt

3. Broadcast like Netflix
4. Marathoner
5. "Deep Purple" by __ Tempo & April Stevens
6. Stitched
7. " __ bient"
8. "Mother- __" by

- Ernie K-Doe
9. Stringed instrument
10. 1939: "Three Little Fishies" band-leader Kay
11. Touchstones
12. In a compassionate way
13. Puts upon

18. Fellows
24. Beer mug
26. Flat-bottomed vessels
29. Rock star Ms. Wilson
30. ZZ Top hit
31. Green inside fruits
33. Dispatch boat
34. Defy
35. Cranium's location
36. Hawaiian volcano: 2 wds.
37. Give too many munchies
38. __ Fail (Irish coronation stone)
39. Law enforcer in a Western
43. On time
44. Patisserie item
45. Variantly fake
47. Rage: 2 wds.
48. Alex P. Keaton's mother
49. Ground-to-moving-truck aids
51. Unspecified amount
54. Pea, in Montreal
55. Upset
56. Vitality, wee-ly
60. "The A-Team" star: wd. + letter

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS Your daily horoscope by Francis Drake

Aries March 21 - April 20
You have an agenda, which is why you will work hard during the next six weeks to earn money. Many of you also will be spending it!

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Fiery Mars will be in your sign for the next six weeks, boosting your energy and giving you lots of drive. (Be careful not to blow some people away.)

Gemini May 22 - June 21
You may have to use your sleuthing skills and diplomacy to deal with someone who might not have your best interests at heart. Unfortunately, this lasts for the next six weeks!

Cancer June 22 - July 23
You will be physically active with others, especially in groups, during the next six weeks. Some of you also will be in competition with each other.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
Your ambition will be aroused for the next six weeks, which is why you will be keen to pursue certain goals. Count on getting a lot done!

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Travel plans will appeal to you during the next month. In addition, many of you will pursue higher education, schooling or further training during the next six weeks.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You have definite ideas about how you want to handle shared property and debt. However, during the next six weeks, these ideas might put you at odds with someone.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You will need to be patient with partners and close friends in the next six weeks, because you might find them to be annoying. This could be so, but you also might just be easily annoyed.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You are gung-ho to work hard in the next six weeks, especially at your job. Naturally, you will produce a lot and get great results.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
It's playtime during the month ahead! You couldn't pick a better time to go on a vacation. Fingers crossed!

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
(Jan. 20 to Feb. 18)
During the next six weeks, you can expect increased chaos and activity on the home front. This might be due to renovations, visiting guests or something unexpected.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
You will be enthusiastic and energetic in all your communication with others for the next six weeks. This will be handy for those of you who write, sell, act or teach. Use this!

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9



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